

## Create a Culture

(modified exercise developed by John Van Leer)

This in-class activity is designed to demonstrate your knowledge of cultural systems and the interaction of culture, biology and environment. Working with your team, you will create a culture from the ground up (literally). You should continually be thinking of the interaction of culture, biology and environment as you decide which traits your fictional culture should exhibit.

## Do not create a culture based on full-scale agriculture.

1. Create a place: Detail the natural environment and location. This should include the landscape formation, plant life, animal life, and weather patterns. If you need to go look up information online, feel free to go to one of the breakout areas to use a computer.
2. Name your culture.
3. Brainstorm the following:
  - a. Physical appearance of people
  - b. Subsistence pattern
  - c. Degree of mobility
  - d. Settlement pattern (How does the culture use the landscape?)
  - e. Shelter
  - f. Technology
  - g. Clothing
  - h. Marriage pattern
  - i. Kinship pattern
  - j. Family pattern
  - k. Belief system
  - l. Economic system
  - m. Political system
  - n. Social roles and norms
  - o. Other traits you deem pertinent
  - p. How the group is dealing with issues associated with modern development
4. Write up a description of your culture explaining how each of the traits creates a holistic culture.
5. Your team will present your culture toward the end of the class period. You may all present it or have one or two people present it—it is up to the group.